

## Abstract

Method for forming a row

5

This invention relates to apparatus of forming a row of sliced product, which has a lateral dimension when aligned in a row. The apparatus 10 includes a row former, generally indicated at 13 and a pattern former generally indicated at 14. The row former forms rows of, for example, tomato slices 16, which are delivered onto a receiving surface, formed by the belt of a conveyor 17. The conveyor 17 is driven intermittently to deliver slices 16 in their row 15 onto the first conveyor 18 of the pattern former 14. The row former 13 includes an inclined conveyor belt 31, which has slats 32 spaced along its length, the spacing being dictated by the lateral dimension of the sliced product to be handled. A series of wiper blades 33 are spaced along the conveyor 31, along the direction of travel. As the belt 31 is driven intermittently the slices are elevated and wiped into the spaces between the slats until rows are formed.

Figure 1

20